RELIGION

Clergymen differ over role in tackling election issues

By **Steve Rabey**/Religion Editor

The 1992 ballot presents issues and candidates that raise prickly moral questions.

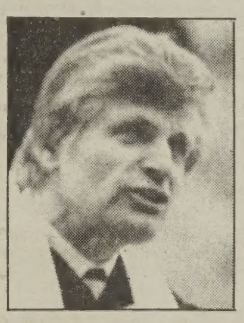
How are local clergy, in their public roles as ministers of God, dealing with potentially divisive ballot issues on homosexuality (Amendment 2), school vouchers (Amendment 7) and gambling (the subject of four initiatives and one referendum), and the three-way race for the presidency? A survey of a dozen local clergy shows widely differing tactics.

Internal Revenue Service regulations prohibit churches — which have income-tax exemptions — from endorsing or raising funds for political candidates or becoming "involved in any other activities that may be beneficial or detrimental to any candidate."

But members of the clergy don't lose their individual rights to freedom of speech and association when they stand at the pulpit. While this forces some clergy into an uncomfortable balancing act between public and private roles, it presents no problem to others.

■ **A. Bernhard Kuiper,** senior pastor of Village Seven Presbyterian Church, says, "I don't use the pulpit as platform. There's no need to. People know where I stand.

"Our church is fairly unanimous on moral issues, such as abortion and homosexuality. And if a person would have a different viewpoint on these things, they just wouldn't fit into our congregation."



Kuiper

Will Perkins and Tony and Joyce Marco (leaders of the Colorado for Family Values push for Amendment 2) and Ron May (a District 15 Republican running for the Colorado House) — do fit into the congregation, and have been the subjects of its prayers.

The church circulated petitions to place Amendment 2 on the ballot, and Kuiper — who can't vote because he is an Australian citizen — has encouraged his congregation to vote.

Sunday, Kuiper's sermon will emphasize the importance of Christian activism.

"We are called to be the salt of the earth, not the sugar candy," he says. "Our lives have to be lived in such a way that we influence society for the good. We are called to be salt, and salt is a purifying element which stops things from getting putrid."

■ **James White,** pastor of The First Congregational Church, says, "Most of the time when I preach I try to take the Scriptures and find something that has both personal applicability and social relevance. I don't abuse the pulpit, and I don't like to mix religion and politics. But I just can't read the Bible and church history without knowing all the time that they are mixed, so I try to do it responsibly."

For weeks, members at First Congregational have been able to pick up placards saying "Vote No on Amendment 2" from a stack in the church hallway. White, who is a supporter of the local anti-religious-right group Citizens Project, wears a button that says, "I may be straight, but I'm not narrow."

This summer, White preached a series of sermons on such issues as health care, peace, ecology, prison reform and the influx of evangelical organizations into Colorado Springs.

White also preached a sermon on Amendment 2 on Aug. 23. At a church-sponsored debate following that sermon, Colorado Family Values member Kevin Tebedo quoted from the Bible and called his opponents followers of a demon doctrine — thus revealing CFV's religious motivations and generating sound bites for TV ads sponsored by Amendment 2 opponents.

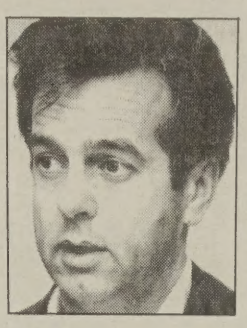
"Amendment 2 has touched a really raw nerve," says White, who agrees with the decision of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ, of which the local church is a part, to oppose the amendment.

"With Amendment 2, two important things are being lost. First, is the whole biblical emphasis on hospitality. And second, we're losing Jesus' whole concern for accepting and loving the unacceptable. After all, what are gay and lesbian people today but our lepers or tax collectors?"

■ **Dean Miller,** pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church, has used the direct approach for 16 years. He marks his votes on a sample ballot, and posts the ballot in the church lobby so members can see it.

Perhaps it's not surprising that the pastor of the independent fundamentalist church is voting for Amendments 2 and 7.

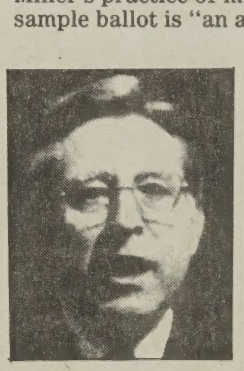
On Amendment 2, Miller says, "I am appalled that our society has sunk so low that we would have to place an item on the ballot to keep the most immoral acts of human beings from being protected by the government.



Miller

On Amendment 7: "This is very important, since I have a Christian school. It's about time we who are Christians, who have private schools to attend, stop giving our tax dollars to public schools, which are totally corrupt, and give some of those dollars to Christian schools."

■ **John Stevens,** senior minister of First Presbyterian Church, says he avoids turning his pulpit into a soap box, and thinks Miller's practice of marking and posting a sample ballot is "an abuse of one's position."



Stevens

Stevens says he refuses requests from members of his church and from the community to speak out on issues ranging from Amendment 2 to the controversy over whether Pikes Peak Library District branches should stock Madonna's "Sex."

"I never officially take a position from the pulpit advocating how Christian people should vote on issues, because I feel in my particular congregation, I'm dealing with a very intelligent group of people — sophisticated people, thinking people — and they don't need me to tell them how they should vote," Stevens says. "And on many of these issues, there are legitimate differences of opinion within the Christian community."

Stevens says it's not the church, but church members, who should be active in politics. But he makes sure church members — including Republican congressman Joel Hefley and Democratic state representative Daphne Greenwood — don't use the church as a platform for their campaigns.

■ **Richard Hanifen,** Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Colorado Springs, will deliver homilies at three local parishes Sunday. But the homilies will focus on the Feast of All Saints, not politics.

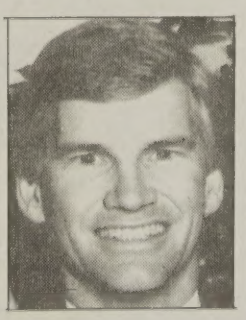
"We seldom take a partisan stand on a particular candidate or issue, and we don't use our churches for that purpose," he says.

Hanifen supports the decision of the Colorado Catholic Conference of Bishops to remain neutral on Amendment 2.

"We had concern that the wording of the amendment was insufficient for people to develop an adequate decision regarding the question of rights because of the lack of adequate distinction between sexual orientation and sexual behavior," he says. "It doesn't make a distinction about homosexuality being between something a person 'has' or something a person 'does.' "

And although Catholic schools may grow if Amendment 7 passes, Hanifen isn't making pronouncements on the voucher issue. "The voucher amendment is a particular strategy for assisting parents to make their choice, but the practicality of such a move is something I'm not prepared to comment on."

■ **Ted Haggard,** pastor of New Life Church, says that while the hallway outside the 3,500-seat sanctuary is stocked with literature from a host of religious-right groups, the church remains neutral.



Haggard

"Certainly, there's a lot of pressure on all of us to turn our churches into political-action committees, but I'm not going to do that at New Life," Haggard says. "Our hallway literature rack is open to absolutely anybody to distribute literature."

The church recently hosted guest speaker Randall Terry, founder of the militantly anti-abortion Operation Rescue and author of a recent mailing proclaiming: "Christian beware: To vote for Bill Clinton is to sin against God."

Haggard opposes Clinton, but disagrees with Terry's tactics. "I would never say that," he says.

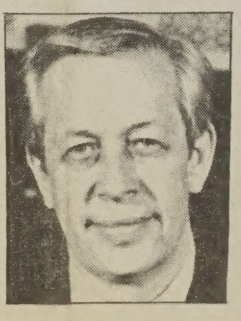
"When people get involved in an issue, they think it's the only one. And some of them are disappointed that we don't do a better job mobilizing Christians for a particular political issue. But political issues come and go; solid issues — like our relationship with Christ — are the real priorities in life."

■ **Lewis Adkison,** pastor of Circle Drive Baptist Church, the largest local congregation in the United States' largest Protestant denomination, isn't impressed by the fact that the Clinton-Gore ticket represents the first time in American history that two Southern Baptists have joined up to seek the White House.

"I am concerned about their lack of a stand on the abortion issue," says Adkison, who addresses many social issues from the pulpit.

"They have not spoken out for the right to life, and their platforms do not reflect that. They don't seem to be very strong in the lifestyle area. And we talk a great deal here about family values. And we are certainly in favor of Amendment 2."

■ **Gerald Trigg,** senior minister of First United Methodist Church, says he tells his congregation, "I do have strong opinions on each of these issues, but so do you. And my personal opinion is not granted special status over yours."



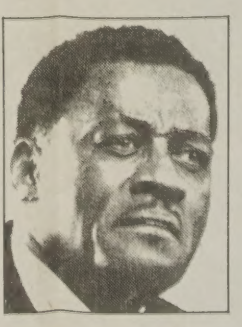
Trigg

Trigg supports the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church's opposition to Amendment 2. "In our denomination, we do not embrace the homosexual lifestyle. On the other hand, we want to protect the rights of all people, including homosexuals. And the way gay-bashing has increased, I suspect that putting in legal form an outlawing of any local effort to avoid discrimination may hasten more of that."

■ **Howard Hirsch,** rabbi of Temple Shalom, says, "Talking about politics from the pulpit is a violation of the rights of people who come to the temple for religious services. The purpose of the pulpit is to preach and interpret the word of God and the word of the Jewish condition, and apply it to contemporary problems, but that does not mean you get into every single political issue."

Although Hirsch opposes Amendment 2, he wants to be a bridge-builder. "I would like to try and contribute a sense of balance to this community, which is so polarized. I don't want to contribute to the rancor."

■ **Milton Proby,** pastor of St. John's Baptist Church, says his commitments to his church, his denomination, and local causes have left little time for political pronouncements.



Proby

"I know the law, and I try to abide by the law," he says. "I don't use the pulpit for elections. I take a biblical approach. The word of God addresses all the issues we need to deal with."

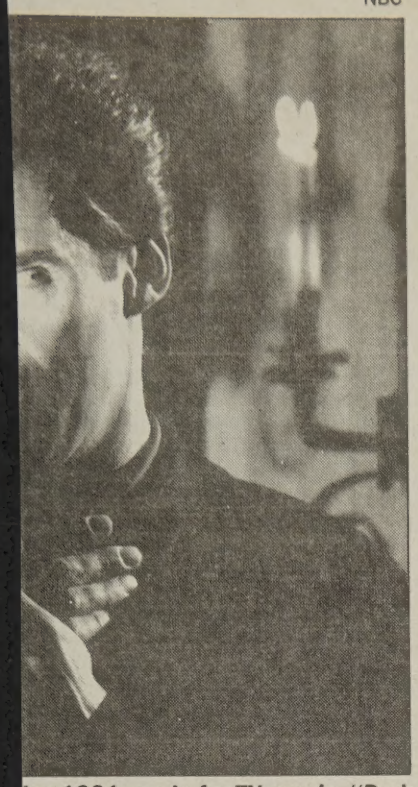
■ **Ray Hendershot,** regional public affairs director for 18 local congregations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, says the church is committed to political neutrality, except on the issue of gambling.

"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints stands opposed to gambling," Hendershot says. "We believe it is morally wrong, and as public policy it is politically unwise to look to gambling as a source of fund-raising."

G.I. 10/31/92 E 3

VIDEOCASSETTES

NBC



he 1991 made-for-TV movie "Dark ved series.

now-far-flung "Waltons" clan returns home for Thanksgiving.

"Keep The Change" (1992, Turner) 95 minutes — Jack Palance, William Petersen. Western: Made for cable tale with Palance and Petersen as rival ranchers.

"Roots: The Gift" (1988, Warner) 94 minutes — Louis Gossett Jr., LeVar Burton. Third sequel to the famed TV miniseries returns to the early slavery days.

Vintage films

"Heart of Glass" (1974, New Yorker) 93 minutes — Josef Bierbichler, Stefan Guttler. Director Werner Herzog's tale of pre-industrial Germany and a a group of villagers who have lost their unique craftmaking.

Music & dance

"AC/DC — Live" (1992, Atlantic) 120 minutes — The heavy metal band performs. Songs include "Back In Black" and "Dirty Deeds."

"Prince — Diamonds and Pearls Home Video Collection" (1992, Warner Reprise) 60 minutes — Compilation of videos by the singer and his new ensemble. Songs include "Cream." (Available on videodisc.)

Sports

"Great Moments in College Bowl History" (1992, Columbia Tristar) 41 minutes — Barry Tompkins hosts this tribute to a hundred years of college football.

"Sudden Death and the Playoffs" (1992, Columbia Tristar) 59 minutes — A look back at the great final moments of many golf tournaments.

Documentary

"Cousteau: The Great White Shark" (1992, Turner) 60 minutes — Jean-Michel Cousteau investigates the behavior of the "lonely lord of the sea."

"Portrait of an Artist" (1992, Home Vision) — Five new installments of the series on great artists. Individual titles: **"Frans Hals of Antwerp"** (54 minutes), **"Jackson Pollock: Ideas in Print"** (51 minutes), **"Jasper Johns: Ideas in Paint"** (56 minutes), **"Robert Motherwell and the New York School: Storming the Citadel"** (56 minutes) and **"Velazquez: The Painter of Painters"** (60 minutes).

RATINGS:

★★★★: **Excellent; ★★★: Good; ★★** Fair; ★: **Poor**

Videos with no stars were not reviewed.

Reviews and synopses compiled by Christopher Corneli, Knight-Ridder Newspapers.

UPCOMING RELEASES

Following is a partial schedule of upcoming movies on video. Release dates are subject to change.

NOVEMBER

4: "Out on a Limb" — Prism
4: "Exiled in America" — Prism
4: "Far and Away" — MCA/Universal
4: "Kill Cruise" — MCA/Universal
4: "Strays" — MCA/Universal
5: "The Dark Angel" — CBS Fox
11: "Encino Man" — Hollywood Pictures
11: "City of Joy" — Columbia TriStar
18: "Darkest Africa" — Republic
18: "Manhunt of Mystery Island" — Republic
18: "Alien" — FoxVideo

TOP VIDEOS

The following are the most popular videos as they appear in next week's issue of Billboard magazine.

VIDEO SALES

1. "Beethoven" — MCA-Universal
2. "The Rescuers" — Disney
3. "Ferngully: The Last Rainforest" — Fox
4. "Cindy Crawford's Shape Your Body Workout" — GoodTimes
5. "Wayne's World" — Paramount
6. "Casablanca: 50th Anniversary Edition" — MGM-UA
7. "Hook" — Columbia TriStar
8. "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" — Live
9. "Eric Clapton: Unplugged" — Warner Reprise
10. "King Kong (60th Anniversary)" — Turner

VIDEO RENTALS

1. "My Cousin Vinny" — Fox
2. "Basic Instinct" — Live
3. "Fried Green Tomatoes" — MCA-Universal
4. "Beethoven" — MCA-Universal
5. "White Men Can't Jump" — Fox
6. "Final Analysis" — Warner
7. "Medicine Man" — Hollywood
8. "The Lawnmower Man" — Columbia TriStar
9. "Straight Talk" — Hollywood
10. "White Sands" — Warner

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PG

COLUMBIA PICTURES

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11:30-2:00-4:30-7:00-9:30
12:00-2:30-5:00-7:30-10:00
IN STEREO

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ACADEMY STATION 6
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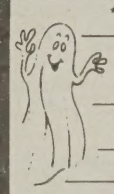


*LAST OF THE MOHICANS (R) 12:15-2:30-5:00-7:15-9:30
*UNDER SEIGE (R) 1:40-3:40-5:40-7:40-9:40
*SNEAKERS (PG-13) 12:15-2:40-5:10-7:30-9:50
*DR. GIGGLES (R) 1:10-3:10-5:10-7:10-9:10
NO DISCOUNT COUPONS UNTIL 11/06
*CANDYMAN (R) 1:00-3:00-5:00-7:00-9:00
*NIGHT AND THE CITY (R) 12:40-3:00-5:15-7:20-9:30
NO DISCOUNT COUPONS UNTIL 11/06
LARGE SCREEN & LARGE AUDITORIUM

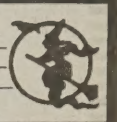
DOLBY STEREO THX SOUND

RUSTIC HILLS NORTH 2
1605 N. Academy 597-9481

*PURE COUNTRY (PG) 12:15-2:40-5:00-7:20-9:40
NO DISCOUNT COUPONS UNTIL 11/06
LARGE AUDITORIUM & LARGE SCREEN
*CANDYMAN (R) 1:30-3:30-5:30-7:30-9:30
LARGE AUDITORIUM & LARGE SCREEN

CINEMA 70 3
Hwy. 24 & Chelton 473-7070

*NIGHT AND THE CITY (R) 12:45-2:55-5:10-7:25-9:30
NO DISCOUNT COUPONS UNTIL 11/06
PUBLIC EYE (R) 1:15-5:30-9:40
OF MICE AND MEN (PG-13) 3:15-7:30
BLADE RUNNER (R) 2:30-5:00-7:30-9:55



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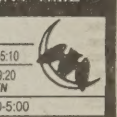
PET SEMATARY 2 (R) 7:05-9:15
HONEY I BLEW UP THE KID (PG) 12:30-2:45-5:10
*SISTER ACT (PG-13) 12:40-2:50-5:00-7:10-9:20
LARGE AUDITORIUM & LARGE SCREEN
3 NINJAS (PG) 1:00-3:00-5:00
INNOCENT BLOOD (R) 7:00-9:10
BE BE'S KIDS (PG-13) 1:30-3:30-5:30-7:30-9:30



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* THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS (R) ▲ 1:40-(5:10)-7:35-10:00
* THE MIGHTY DUCKS (PG) 1:00-3:15-(5:40)-8:00-10:20
*UNDER SIEGE (R) ▲ 1:20-3:30-(5:50)-8:10-10:30
*DR. GIGGLES (R) ▲ 3:45-(6:00)-10:35 Special Engagement
NIGHT & THE CITY (R) ▲ 1:00-3:05-(5:20) 7:45-9:55 Special Engagement
*CANDYMAN (R) ▲ 1:10-3:20-(5:35) 7:55-10:10
*HERO (PG-13) 1:30-8:15 ONLY

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(2:10 4:30) 7:00 9:10
Tom Selleck
MR BASEBALL (PG13)
(2:20 4:40) 7:15 9:30
Daniel Day Lewis
LAST OF THE MOHICANS (R)
(2:00 4:25) 7:10 9:45

CITADEL TERRACE 6 — Academy Blvd & Platte Ave. — 591-2828

Larry Drake
DR GIGGLES (R) ★
(12:10 2:30 4:55) 7:15 9:45
Gerard Depardieu
1492 (PG13) ★
(1:45 5:00) 8:10
SNEAKERS (PG13)
(11:50 2:20 4:50) 7:30 10:00
Steven Segal
UNDER SIEGE (R) ★
(12:45 3:00 5:15) 7:45 10:00
Kevin Kline
CONSENTING ADULTS (R) ★
(12:30 2:40 4:45) 7:20 9:30
HERO (PG13) (12:30 4:55) 9:20
CAPTAIN RON (PG13)
(2:50) 7:15

CHAPEL HILLS 9 — N. Academy Blvd. & Briargate — 594-6000

Robert Redford's
A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT (PG) ★
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Gerard Depardieu
1492 (PG13)
(1:45 5:00) 8:10
CAPTAIN RON (PG13)
(12:15 2:35 5:05) 7:30 9:45
George Strait
PURE COUNTRY (PG) ★
(11:45 2:05 4:35) 7:15 9:50
Tom Selleck
MR BASEBALL (PG13)
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Joe Pecsi
PUBLIC EYE (R)
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CONSENTING ADULTS (R) ★
(12:40 3:00 5:25) 7:35 9:40
SCHOOL TIES (PG13)
(12:20 2:30 4:45) 7:05 9:30
John Malkovich
OF MICE AND MEN
(2:50) 7:00

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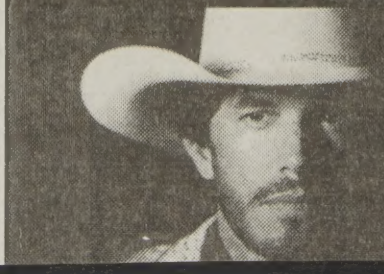

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